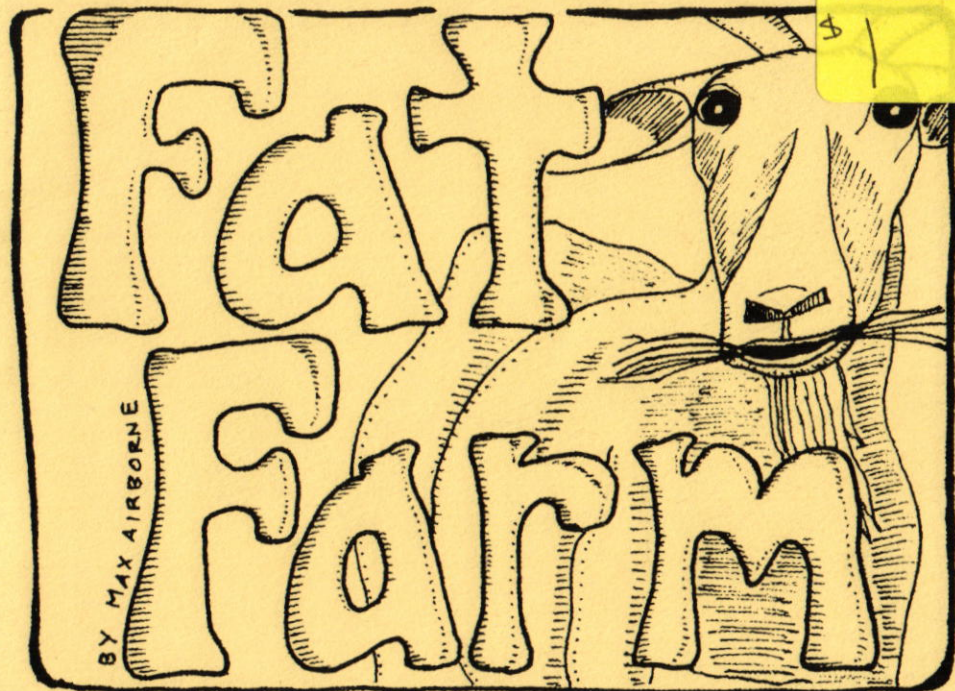




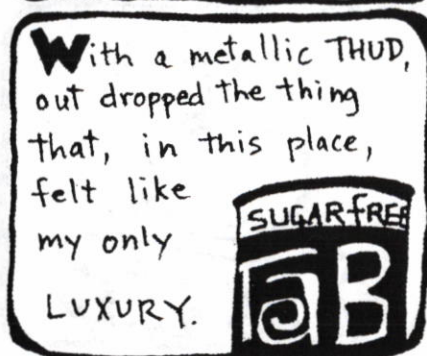
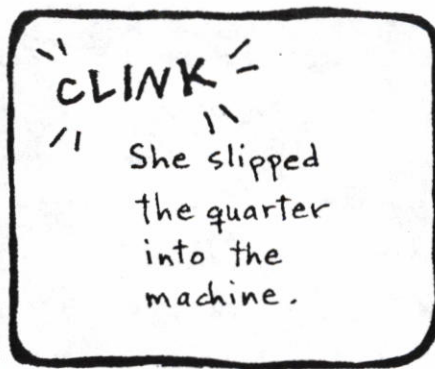
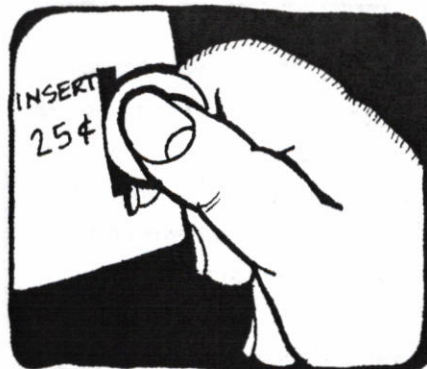
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PRICE

\$

1



"Your hands look thinner. I can see the weight coming off."



What?! I'd spent the weekend frantically transcribing song lyrics I wanted to learn, into the wee hours until my hands ached,



Now, it was no secret that the bribe was mine. She'd seen me slam the door, and she'd seen me in a door-slamming mood before.

The Tab was my implied agreement not to go there.





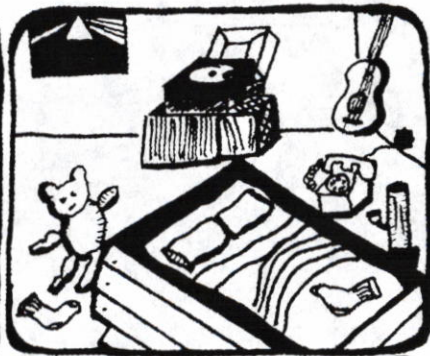
"Buy me a
Tab?"

I asked her, with a
pathetic look on my face.

I knew she would. It
was how she got me
out of bed in the
morning, her bribe,
a cold can of Tab
from the machine.



so **STIFF** I couldn't
drop the pen. I'd been
at my mom's on a weekend
pass, revelling in luxuries
like record players, my
well-loved record collection,
my waterbed with rainbow
sheets.



"What!?!?" I asked, incredulous.



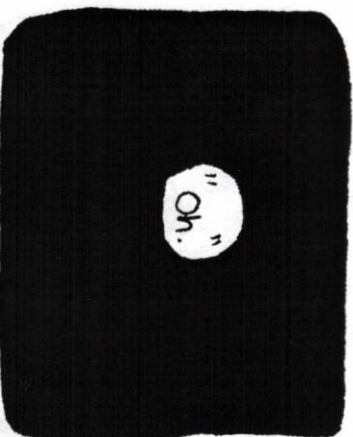
"Your hands. They're looking
nice. They're getting thin."

The doctor's comment took
me by surprise.

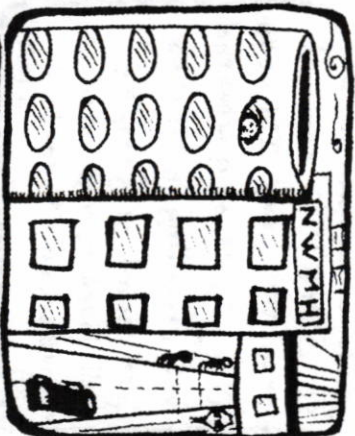
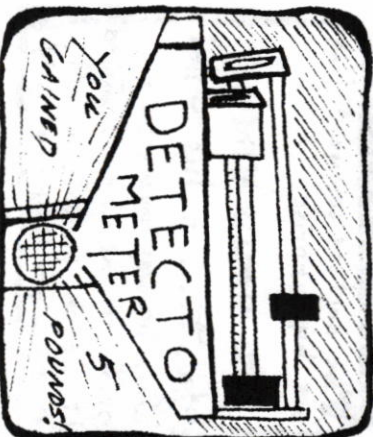
I HATED HIM.

Yet... in his twisted
way he was expressing
pride in me, and I wanted
it, which pissed me off.

@*!m d?!@*?!*!@?!



"Oh."



"... **B**ut, the scale tells a different story. You gained weight over the weekend. **WHAT'S YOUR EXPLANATION, YOUNG LADY?**"

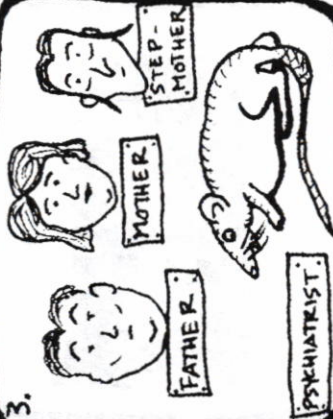
Outside the shrink's office, **BERNADETTE** was standing in the doorway of the nurses' station.



She was the nerdy "MENTAL HEALTH WORKER" who **REALLY** wanted me to **LIKE HER.**

Hummm...

3.



4. Kept me locked up and starving because they thought it would save me, because they could. Because I was 13.



MY SHRINK.



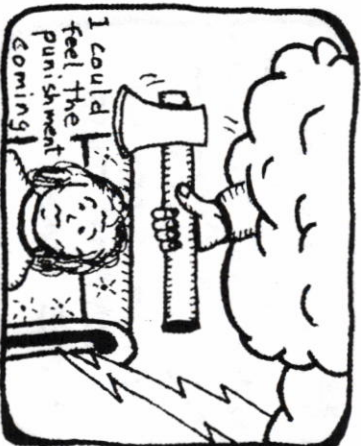
He was so uptight you had to wonder if he ever took a dump. He was always hyper, authoritarian, and on the brink of being pissed off. **THERE WAS NO LOVE IN THIS LITTLE MAN.**

"FINE!"

I left and slammed the door behind me.

"I don't know."

LISTEN YOUNGLADY!
"I don't know" is NOT a sufficient answer. I know you're LYING! WHY DID YOU GAIN FIVE POUNDS OVER THE WEEKEND?"



I could feel the punishment coming!

His weekend, however, I had been drinking. AND HE KNEW, he knew something. Bored with the game, knowing I'd lost, I CONFESSED.

You see, I was on a diet. A BIG DIET.

I was allowed 500 calories a day. Every privilege I had was contingent on the numbers revealed by the scale. The funny thing was, those numbers didn't always reflect what I had eaten.



I had a few drinks.

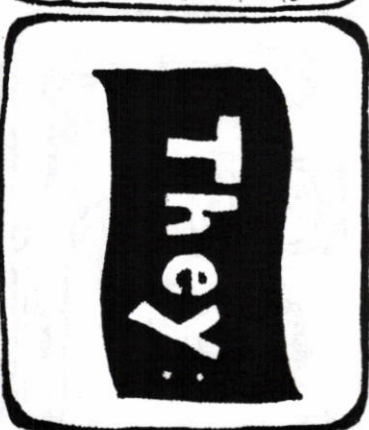


You're really pushing it, young lady!

If you ever want to get out of here, you'll learn some self-discipline. NO PASSES FOR A MONTH!



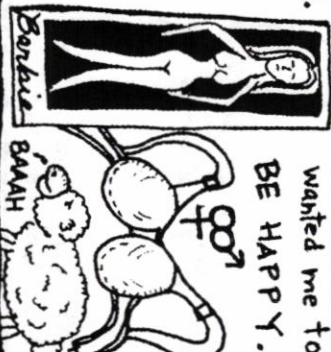
Had determined that I was unhappy because I was fat.



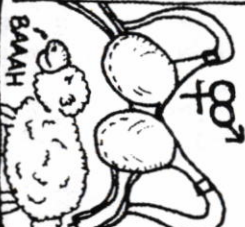
They:



wanted me to BE HAPPY.



Barbie



BAAH